

**REMARKS**

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 28, 2009. Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11 and 12 are pending in this application, with claim 1 being in independent form. By the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Claims 2-5, 8 and 9 have been withdrawn from consideration. It is submitted that no new matter has been added and no new issues have been raised by the present Amendment.

Claims 1, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly obvious from WO 00/02715 to Newell et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,002,524 to Mills. Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits independent claim 1 is patentably distinct from the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 relates to a machine for slitting plane packaging blanks comprising a driving roller assembly for advancing the packaging blanks and at least one rotatable slitting roller with at least one knife for producing a front edge slit and/or a rear edge slit in each packaging blank. A back-pressure roller is provided below the slitting roller, the back-pressure roller including two relatively thin, circular disks interspaced a distance corresponding to the thickness of the knife, the knife extending a distance into the space between the two circular disks. At least one sensor is provided upstream of the at least one rotatable slitting roller for detecting the packaging blanks and for activating the at least one rotatable slitting roller accordingly.

According to an embodiment of the present disclosure, the knife extends a distance into the space between the two circular disks (e.g., see Figures 1, 2 and 4) and the circular disks make the edges of the front and rear edge slits particularly sharp (page 7, lines 7 and 8.) In addition, at least one sensor is provided upstream of the slitting roller which detects the packaging blanks and activates the slitting roller accordingly, providing increased operational reliability. Of course, the

claims are not limited to the disclosed embodiments.

Newell et al., as understood by Applicant, relates to an independently driven slotter unit. A male slotting blade has an arcuate shape, having an angular sweep of about 220° to about 320°.

Mills, as understood by Applicant, relates to the manufacture of corrugated board and was cited in the Office Action as allegedly disclosing a back pressure roller having two thin disks separated by a distance corresponding to the thickness of the knife. The knife extends into the space between the disks.

However, Applicant finds no teaching or suggestion in the cited art of a machine for slitting plane packaging blanks comprising a driving roller assembly for advancing the packaging blanks and at least one rotatable slitting roller with at least one knife for producing a front edge slit and/or a rear edge slit in each packaging blank, wherein at least one sensor is provided upstream of the at least one rotatable slitting roller for detecting the packaging blanks and for activating the at least one rotatable slitting roller accordingly.

Accordingly, Applicants submits independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited art.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fees to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Entry of this amendment and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Richard F. Jaworski', is written over a horizontal line.

RICHARD F. JAWORSKI

Reg. No. 33,515

Attorney for Applicant

Cooper & Dunham LLP

Tel.: (212) 278-0400